(c) Actual export growth during 1992-93 was lower than the target. Among the reasons for slow growth in exports in 1992-93 mention may be made of rapid fall in trade with CIS and East European countries recession in industrially advanced countries and sluggish growth in World trade. However, exports performance in the current year is satisfactory. The export growth provisionally estimated at 20.19 per cent during April-October, 1993 compared to April-October, 1992 latest period for which trade data are available, is about same as the target set for the year.

(d) In order to increase exports in the Eighth Plan period the Government have taken major steps for liberalisation of trade which include provision of export linked imports, reduction of import licensing, strengthening export incentives and removal of procedural irritants through simplification of Policy and procedures. In 1993-94 Budget, the system of market determined unified excahnge rate has been introduced and customs and excise duty on imports mary raw materials and capital goods have been reduced. An export culture is sought to be built up in the country incorporating of Government agencies and trade and industry. Emphasis is being placed on improving quality to increase competitiveness and production specifically for export.

LIFTING OF BAN ON TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

*2332. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to lift the ban on trade and other economic relations between India and South Africa;

(b) what is the extent of expected Indian exports and imports to and from South Africa; and

(c) what are the rading prospecs with South Africa as assessed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) It is primarily for the industry and commerce of the two countries to select the items of export and import from each other, depending on requirements and competitiveness of the goods. However, Indian exports to South Africa are expected to gain substantially though it is difficult to estimate he exact value at this stage.

PRODUCTION OF MITCO

2333. SHRI E. BALANANDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the production of MITCO in the last three years;

(b) the effect of policy of decanalisation on the working of MITCO with details thereof and the steps taken thereof;

(c) the amount spent on litigation by MITCO with Mica workers union on the discriminatory wage structure of the employees with details and item-wise and year-wise break-up; and

(d) the justification of such expenditure in litigation in the period of economic stringency ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) The production of MITCO at its various plants during the last three years has been as under :—

*Previously Unstarred Question 1436, transferred from 14th December, 1993.

(Qty. in MT)

Year	Mica Paper	IMP Plant	Silvered Mica & Mica Capacitor	Mica Powder
1990-91	155	Neg.	Neg.	64
1991-92	79	05	Neg.	19
1992-93	77	04	Neg.	30

(Neg.—Negligible)

(b) Decanalisation of processed mica with effect from 23-10-90 contributed to a reduction in the turnover of MITCO which has been as follows :

Year	Rs. in lakhs
1990-91	1901.94
1991-92	713.37
1992-93	374.00

Measures taken to improve the performance of MITCO include rationalisation of employees; agressive marketing drive particularly in respect of mica products; initiatives taken to improve production of value added items at MITCO's plants and curtailment of administrative expenditure.

(c) Item-wise, year-wise, break-up of expenditure incurred on litigation by MITCO with Mica workers union is not readily available. However, total expenditure incurred by MITCO towards legal advice, TA|DA for officers as well as other incidental expenses upto 30th April, 1993 comes to Rs. 1.3 lakh approximately.

(d) Despite economic stringency, MITCO would have to incur legal expenses wherever it is considered necessary and appropriate.

Number of Employees of MITCO

2334. SHRI E. BALANANDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of employees of MITCO as on 31st March, 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993 with category-wise break-up;

(b) the total number of employees who have retired under Voluntary Retirement Scheme in the last three years, with category-wise break up;

(c) the payment made to the staff and executives in the last three years with category-wise and year-wise break up;

(d) whether productive workers were removed under Voluntary Retirement Scheme but not unproductive overheads with less financial relief to the company; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) A statement is attached (See below)

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.